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## FIRST SPECIMEN OF BAIRD'S SANDPIPER COLLECTED IN THE EAST

Meantime my own collection of local birds was growing apace, and it was about this time (August 27, 1870) that I took a specimen of Baird's Sandpiper on Long Island, Boston Harbor, the first ever known to occur east of the Mississippi. This specimen proved something of a puzzle to Brewster and myself, and eventually led us to the Agassiz Museum and to J. A. Allen, then Curator of its bird and mammal collection. He very soon verified our identification, and we speedily came to know him very well. If I mistake not he was then at work on his "Mammals and Birds of East Florida", an epoch-making book, which appeared in the following April. Subsequently, at the request of Dr. Coues, I sent the sandpiper to Washington for examination, and in this way, perhaps, became known, by name at least, to Professor Baird, Dr. Coues, and Mr. Ridgway.

## ACQUAINTANCE WITH DOCTOR T. M. BREWER

It must have been about this time, too, that I became acquainted with Doctor Brewer, then well-known in Boston as a publisher and book dealer. Though possessing a somewhat peppery disposition, he was a most kind and courteous gentleman, and was particularly fond of young people, and ever ready to lend a helping hand or speak a word of cheer to the aspiring young ornithologist. He came to my house to see some of my treasures, particularly a set of Sharp-tailed finch's eggs taken in Cambridge on the Charles River marshes, and more than once invited Brewster and myself to his house where we examined with pleasure his large collection of eggs. This he willed to the Agassiz Museum.

It was somewhat later than this—I do not recall the exact year—that through him I was offered the position, then vacant, of Secretary of the Boston Society of Natural History. This I declined, not liking the confinement of an indoor position.

In my mind Dr. Brewer was the living link connecting Audubon with our own times, and he often spoke of the pioneer ornithologist and of his acquaintance with him. Dr. Brewer knew Professor Baird intimately, and it was, perhaps, largely through him that I became known in Washington as a "promising young bird collector". Later, when I became attached to the Wheeler Survey, he always called at my office when visiting Washington and examined with great interest my bird and egg collections from the west. He died in 1880.

*(To be continued)*

## FROM FIELD AND STUDY

**Correction of Impression.**—I have found that at least one person regards the last paragraph of my "Trinomials and Current Practice" Communication in the last CONDOR (xxi, 1919, p. 92), in which I deplore the attitude of certain "quasi-ornithologists", as embodying my personal opinion of Mr. P. A. Taverner. As one has thought this, others undoubtedly will; but such a possibility never entered my head. I have the greatest respect for Mr. Taverner as a man and as an ornithologist, and would not dream of trying to belittle him. I added the last paragraph merely to condense two of my ideas into one communication, and meant exactly what I tried to imply—that I have no patience with those who give all their time and attention to eggs, butterflies or big-game hunting, and yet indulge in a mighty outburst of lamentation whenever a new bird is described.—A. B. HOWELL, Covina, California, April 21, 1919.

**Notes on Some Catalina Island Birds.**—On reviewing Mr. A. B. Howell's paper, "Birds of the Islands off the Coast of Southern California", in connection with observa-

tions made by the writer on Catalina Island during the first seventeen days of March, 1919, it has been thought that the following notes might be worth recording. Unfortunately permission was not had to do any shooting on the island, and specimens could not be taken. The subspecific identity of four of the following birds has therefore not been established.

At least one, and probably two, Sparrow Hawks (*Falco sparverius* subsp.) were seen on numerous occasions about Avalon and on the terraces overlooking the town, and on March 9, three of these birds were seen on a ten-mile walk toward the upper end of the island. On this same walk, about five miles from the town, a Pigeon Hawk (*Falco columbarius* subsp.) was seen at close range.

The Sapsucker whose work is so much in evidence on the trees in and about Avalon was caught at his drilling on two occasions, both within the town itself, on the 15th and 16th respectively, and proved to be the Red-breasted (*Sphyrapicus ruber ruber*).

On the 10th a flock of perhaps twenty Juncos (*Junco hyemalis* subsp.) was noted high up the slopes back of the town in a very brushy place where the going was bad. The birds were positively identified as Juncos, but a close enough view was not had to warrant even a guess as to the form.

A Hermit Thrush, supposedly the Alaska (*Hylocichla guttata guttata*), was everywhere common, from the beach to the top of the ridge, and no place on the island was visited where these birds could not be found scattered about in numbers. They were by far the most numerous land-bird observed during the entire seventeen days.

Three Western Robins (*Planesticus migratorius propinquus*) were seen on the 6th in the orchard of John Brinkley (Chicken John), whose attention was called to them and who stated that in a twenty-eight year's residence on the spot he had not before noticed the bird. Two residents of Avalon reported Robins in their door-yards on the same day, and remarked on the unusualness of seeing Robins on Catalina.

A scattered flock of between thirty and forty Western Bluebirds (*Sialia mexicana occidentalis*) was under observation from March 5 to 10 on the beautiful golf course back of the town. These birds also proved to be curiosities to some of the natives. A Sharp-shinned Hawk was seen to attack this flock repeatedly. The Bluebirds apparently left during the night of the 10th, as they were searched for over the entire lower end of the island and none was met with after that date.—HARRY HARRIS, *Kansas City, Missouri, April 18, 1919.*

**Notes from Southern California.**—Additional records of the Baird Sandpiper (*Pisobia bairdi*): September 10, 1918, I found two of these birds on the beach near Del Rey, Los Angeles County. One, a female, was secured. More than three weeks later, on October 4, a lone male was taken in the same immediate locality. Was this mere coincidence, or is it fresh material for the mated-for-life theorists? The rarity of the species on this coast, and the circumstances under which these birds were taken, certainly suggest a mated pair, of which, one being killed, the remaining bird lingered in the same locality until it, also, was collected.

Lewis Woodpecker (*Asyndesmus lewisi*) in the San Bernardino Mountains: One taken on Deep Creek, and one at Big Bear Lake, September 19 and 22, respectively, 1918. Likely the species is of regular occurrence in these mountains, but I know of no published records.

White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*): A bird of this species came regularly to a feeding-table at the home of Mrs. W. H. Martz, 5166 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles, where I examined it leisurely at a distance of about twenty feet. It was first noted late in November, 1918, and seen almost daily until some time during the following February, always in company with a flock of Gambel Sparrows, which never allowed the other to feed until they were sated.

Cliff Swallow (*Petrochelidon lunifrons*) and Phainopepla (*Phainopepla nitens*) on Santa Catalina Island: A flock of about twenty Cliff Swallows was noted on May 12, 1918. This, I believe, constitutes the first record for the Island. The Phainopepla was seen on the 14th of the same month, this record being the earliest but not the first published one of the species.

Baird Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax pelagicus resplendens*): A dead bird on the beach near Hyperion, January 6, 1919, is the only one of the species I have found during

five years of beach work. Other collectors state they have never seen it in this locality; hence the record seems worthy of publication.

**Little Brown Crane (*Grus canadensis*):** A specimen shot at dusk on January 31, 1918, near Los Angeles, by a hunter who mistook it for a goose, was presented to this Museum, where it was mounted and placed on exhibition.

**Marbled Godwit (*Limosa fedoa*):** A winter record, January 6, 1919, appears unique. The bird was seen from a car window, near Del Rey; but no mistake could have been made in identification.

**A cripples' convention:** While bird-looking on the beach January 1, 1919, near Hermosa Beach, I noted a flock of Sanderling (*Calidris leucophaea*) that acted peculiarly. By working carefully along at some distance from the water, the birds were induced to string out in a line near the water's edge and passed me in that formation, eight of them running and *fourteen hopping*, and close inspection with a glass showed that fourteen of that flock were one-legged. Less than 200 feet farther up the beach were six Knots (*Tringa canutus*) (note the winter record) of which two were "hoppers"; while close beside them, farther from the water, was a flock of seventeen Snowy Plover (*Aegialitis nivos*a) of which not less than five were one-legged. It would seem natural that birds of one species, crippled and unable to compete on even terms with their normal fellows, should flock together to some extent; but such a percentage of cripples, of three species, and the proximity of the different groups of cripples, is interesting, to say the least.—L. E. WYMAN, *Museum of History, Science and Art, Los Angeles, June 14, 1919.*

**The MacFarlane Screech Owl in California.**—Through an oversight there was omitted from the 1915 California state list of birds a race of screech owl fully entitled to have been included. This was the MacFarlane Screech Owl, *Otus asio macfarlanei* (Brewster), the claims to which as a bird of California were clearly set forth by Mr. Robert Ridgway in 1914 (*Birds of North and Middle America*, Part VI, pp. 697-698). He gives the range of this owl as including "northeastern California (Fort Crook; Baird, Shasta County?)". The evidence for its occurrence at Baird remains questionable, but for Fort Crook, which is near Burgettville in extreme northeastern Shasta County, there is a specimen in the United States National Museum.

Through the kind offices of Dr. Chas. W. Richmond, Associate Curator of Birds in the National Museum, the undersigned has been privileged to examine this Fort Crook specimen. It is no. 16027, U. S. Nat. Mus., male, taken by John Feilner (probably in 1860), and is in apparently as good state of preservation as if it were taken last year instead of nearly sixty years ago. The present writer has made comparisons between this bird and *macfarlanei* from eastern Washington, without detecting differences of any seeming consequence. Larger size, greater extent of blackish markings on the contour feathers generally, and the browner tone of color dorsally, serve to distinguish it from any specimen of the more southern California races, *bendirei*, *quercinus* and *gilmani*.

The Fort Crook bird, having been in existence so long, has been commented upon by a number of writers before Ridgway announced its status in positive terms. Brewster (*Bull. Nutt. Orn. Club*, VII, 1882, p. 32) considered it an intergrade between *bendirei* and *kennicottii*; Townsend (*Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus.*, x, 1887, p. 203) placed it under the name "*kennicottii*?"; Brewster (*Auk*, VIII, 1891, p. 143) thought it "about intermediate" between *bendirei* and *macfarlanei*; and Hasbrouck (*Auk*, x, 1893, p. 256) put it under *bendirei*.

Collectors visiting the Modoc region of extreme northeastern California should keep special lookout for the Macfarlane Screech Owl. It ought to be common there locally, even though but one California-taken specimen seems as yet to be contained in any museum.—J. GRINNELL, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, April 18, 1919.*

**A Breeding Record for the Red-headed Woodpecker in New Mexico.**—On Monday, June 16, while making a trip about five miles south of Albuquerque in company with S. E. Piper and J. S. Ligon, of the U. S. Biological Survey, we saw a Red-headed Woodpecker (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*) enter a hole in a dead cottonwood tree. An examination showed the hole to contain young birds, probably about ten days old. Both adults were observed a few minutes later carrying food to the young, and on passing the same place about dark one of the old birds was found on the nest. As nearly as I am aware

this is the first breeding record for this species in New Mexico with the exception of the one noted by Mr. Ligon below.

The Red-headed Woodpecker has been observed in New Mexico apparently with increasing frequency since 1915. I find in my records the following notes on the occurrence of this species:

1 adult bird, Albuquerque, June 7 and 8, 1915.

1 adult, Roswell, Feb. 12, 1916.

1 adult, 4 miles north of Albuquerque, Aug. 18, 1918.

1 adult, in same locality as the nest above described, May 25, 1919.

Mr. J. S. Ligon, of the U. S. Biological Survey, supplies the following notes from his records:

July, 1915, nesting at Ft. Sumner, New Mexico.

Sept. 9, 1916, 1 adult, South Spring River, Roswell, New Mexico.

Sept. 4, 1917, 1 adult, Los Lunas, New Mexico.

Aug. 28, 5 adults observed between LaJoya and Isleta, on the Rio Grande, New Mexico.

May 27, 1919, 1 adult, at White Tail, Sacramento Mts., New Mexico.

In a previous issue of THE CONDOR, I have advanced the theory that the Red-headed Woodpecker is invading New Mexico by way of the telephone poles along the transcontinental railway lines. In support of this theory it is interesting to note that all the observations listed above were on or near railway lines.—ALDO LEOPOLD, *Albuquerque, New Mexico, June 17, 1919.*

## EDITORIAL NOTES AND NEWS

The *Second Ten Year Index to The Condor* will probably be off the press by the time this issue of THE CONDOR reaches our readers. No pains have been spared by its compiler, Mr. J. R. Pemberton, to make this index serviceable in every feasible way. The user will not only be able to find his way to the extensive literature contained in volumes xi to xx by *species* (under all the different names employed for each), but will also be guided on the basis of subject matter, geography, and authors. Needless to say every CONDOR subscriber and Cooper Club member should possess himself at once of a copy of this Index (Avifauna No. 13). Applications should be made to the Club business manager, W. LEE CHAMBERS, *Eagle Rock, California.*

About the most thoroughly satisfying book we have yet seen on the birds of any one country is the work now appearing from the press of Witherby & Co., 326 High Holborn, London, entitled "A Practical Handbook of British Birds." No less than six experienced students of British birds are collaborating in the production of the work, each attending to some special portion of the matter relating to each species. Dr. Ernst Hartert is handling the nomenclature and keys; Mr. H. F. Witherby furnishes part of the descriptions and diagnoses, and Miss Annie C. Jackson, part; the field characters are drawn up for the most part by Mr. C. Oldham; Mr. Norman F. Ticehurst

traces the migrations of the birds; and the Rev. F. C. R. Jourdain deals with their food and breeding habits. Here is a demonstration of the higher plane of output which is bound to be reached through organized co-operative effort. The three parts of the work which have so far appeared, comprising over two hundred pages and several excellent plates, respond to our scrutiny as well-nigh ideal, as regards both method of treatment and content. Of course our British friends have many more years of ornithological history to draw from, as well as the records of many more observers, than we of western North America have. Any approach to the completeness shown by their work would as yet be impossible here. Many, many years of conscientious gathering and recording of facts yet remain to be done before west-Americans can hope to put through so complete a "practical handbook" of our birds.

Dr. Witmer Stone, Curator of the Philadelphia Academy and Editor of *The Auk*, has spent the early summer in the Chiricahua Mountains, southeastern Arizona. Botany as well as Ornithology received his attention, though we have an idea the main object of the trip was a thorough rest; for Dr. Stone is a prodigious worker and has but rarely allowed himself a vacation. Mrs. Stone "came along too"; and Mr. and Mrs. J. Eugene Law are of the party. Mr. Alex-